

The University of Chicago

A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
IN THE EVANGELICAL
DENOMINATION

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE GRADUATE FACULTY IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL THEOLOGY
1931

By
ELMER DETWEILER RIEBEL

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The history of religious education in American Protestantism during the nineteenth century is chiefly confined to the activities within the various denominations. With the opening of the twentieth century, there are indications of a breaking away from the exclusively denominational emphasis toward the broader field of inter-denominational cooperation.

The present period may therefore be considered as that of a transition stage in the development of religious education. Procedures for inter-denominational cooperation are as yet in their formative stage. Community enterprises in religious education are still highly experimental.

The time seems opportune for a thorough and careful analysis of the development of religious education within any of the denominations in order that the values achieved and experience gained may be conserved as a source of historical data for future enterprises in religious education.

The Evangelical denomination, along with other Protestant communions, undertook the stimulation and direction of its own program of religious education during the greater part of the nineteenth century. In 1832, the first Sunday School of the denomination was founded at Lebanon, Pennsylvania.

This study is undertaken with the conviction that a thorough review of the historical development of religious education

in this communion, and a survey and careful analysis of significant trends together with an evaluation of these trends, will not only conserve the values achieved in the past but, we trust, make a positive contribution toward the future religious educational policy of the denomination.

Part I

Beginnings of the Evangelical Denomination

The religious conditions out of which the denomination arose play an important part in the future development of religious education within the communion, so far as its policies and emphases are concerned. The Evangelical denomination, numbering 260,852 adherents, (1930), had its beginning at the opening of the nineteenth century in eastern Pennsylvania. The population of this section of the state was made up chiefly of German-speaking peoples. It was this national group which furnished the racial background through which the denomination began and continued its work.

The beginnings of denominational consciousness center around the personality of Jacob Albright, the founder of the Evangelical denomination. Through his personal ministry among the German-speaking peoples, he perfected an organization of the new converts in the year 1800. Being familiar with the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he developed a similar type of church life, so far as organization and discipline were concerned. The class meeting and the circuit system formed the nucleus of church organization.

While meagre provision was made for the religious instruction of children, the home was the center of religious interest. All of the general meetings of the group were held in the homes, until the year 1816, when the first church building was erected in New Berlin, Pennsylvania. The first provision for the formal instruction of children was made in 1809 when a translation of an English catechism was authorized for use by the ministers.

The significance for religious education of this early period from 1800 to 1832 is in the emphasis upon family life; the home as the center of religious activity; the early religious background of the membership; and the contribution which the relationship between other religious bodies made to the development of the Evangelical denomination

In its historical analysis of the development of religious education within this communion, this study gives consideration to definite trends in the following areas of religious education, namely, (1) organization; (2) curriculum; (3) procedures of worship, teaching, leadership training, service and recreation; (4) objectives, concluding with an evaluation of these trends.

Part II

Trends in the Organization of Religious Education

The study of the development of the organizational procedure for religious education is a study, for the most part, of the growth of the agencies of religious education, concluding with the attempts at the correlation of these agencies, by means of boards

of religious education.

Before considering the development within the Evangelical denomination, it is necessary to observe the trends in religious education elsewhere, during this period, beginning with 1830. While religious education developed in denominational molds, there is no question, but that the experience of one denomination influenced the procedure of another. There were two developments outside the Evangelical denomination which had a direct bearing upon the program of religious education within the church. These were the influence of the Methodist Episcopal Church in its active program of Sunday School development, and the work conducted by the American Sunday School Union.

Regarding the influence of the Methodist church, while there is not sufficient historical data available to draw any positive conclusion as to the degree of influence, there is basis for believing that the organizing of Sunday Schools within the Evangelical Church was stimulated by the activity of the Methodist group. An editorial in the first issue of the denominational paper Der Christliche Botschafter, (1836), gives a significant insight. The writer is urging the church to become active in the organizing of Sunday Schools, and continues as follows: "Other denominations are very active in this work, and some have made remarkable progress. The Methodists have Sunday Schools everywhere." The fact that "the Methodists have Sunday Schools everywhere" may have served as an impetus to a similar movement within the Evangelical body.

So far as the undenominational activities in religious

education are concerned, the American Sunday School Union stands out as the predominant organization. Organized in the city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1824, it was able, through its missionary and promotional program, to make itself vitally felt in the religious educational activities of the period. Since this organization was most active in the state of Pennsylvania and since this also was the state in which the Evangelical denomination had its beginning and the major proportion of its membership, it is obvious that it would stimulate organization of Sunday Schools within all denominations, including the Evangelical.

Organization of Sunday Schools

The first Sunday School of the Evangelical Church was organized in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, in October, 1832. Disciplinary provision for the introduction of Sunday Schools in local churches throughout the denomination was made by the general conference of the church in the year 1835. The subsequent history of the Sunday School movement within the denomination is divided into two periods,- first, the period from 1832 to 1875 during which Sunday Schools were organized in local churches without denominational oversight, and second, the period after 1875, in which the church through its general conference and the delegation of responsibility to the local pastor assumed control of the movement.

Since there were no definite provisions regarding methods of organization or types of materials, local churches and pastors hesitated in the matter of organizing Sunday Schools, not so much from indifference as a lack of information how to go about

it. No one board or individual in the denomination was assigned the responsibility for sponsoring the Sunday School movement. Therefore such leadership as was developed was purely voluntary. The principal voice and worker for the cause of religious education during the period from 1832 to 1875 was William W. Orwig. Not only a most active supporter of the Sunday School, but as an author of catechisms, writer and compiler of Sunday School song books, writer of numerous articles appearing in the denominational publications, pertaining to every phase of religious education as it was then known, the name of Orwig holds first rank in the early development of religious education within the denomination. It was in his capacity as editor of the Christliche Botschafter that we discover the important place which he occupied. Were it not for his early writings, the available source material covering this period would be very limited. A resume of the editorials and general articles reveals the deep concern he had for the successful outcome of the Sunday School and other educational movements, as well as a revelation of some of the problems which came up for consideration.

The period during which Orwig was writing these articles is characterized by the usual difficulties which arise in the development of any new movement. First, there is the lack of understanding and a fear lest a successful outcome is not possible. Second, there was a lack of effective pastoral and lay leadership. Third, inadequate provision was made for materials to be used in connection with the work of the school. So far as building and equipment are concerned, the churches were not erected with a view

to their educational usefulness, but rather were one-room structures, planned to meet what were considered the needs of adult worship service.

The principal type of activity in this early period was the meeting and solving of difficulties as they arose. One of the values which arise in a consideration of the historical background is that many of the problems which arose earlier still face the modern worker in religious education. Problems of objectives, curriculum, procedures and organization are present today. The advantage which the modern worker in the field of religious education has is that there is available for him an increasing literature of historical data which may be relied upon as a resource in meeting the issues as they arise. The first Sunday Schools in the Evangelical denomination had a minimum of organization. They were primarily schools, one of whose purposes was instruction in the German language. The Sunday School was organized by adults in behalf of the children. The age of the children ranged from six to fourteen. There were no young people or adult classes. It was a common practice not to hold Sunday Schools during the winter months.

The policy of including other age groups was gradually introduced. With the inclusion of classes for young people, and then in the emphasis placed upon the adult Bible class movement in the latter part of the nineteenth century, provision was ultimately made for all ages. In the Sunday Schools as organized at the present time, the larger schools have adopted the departmental method of Children's, Young People's and Adult Divisions, while

the smaller schools usually provide separate groupings of the smaller children.

A very significant development of the early Sunday School movement in the Evangelical denomination was the placing of the management of the school in a local "Union" or "Society," (called in the German language "Verein"). This Union had supervision of the local Sunday School. It was composed of adult members of the church or community who were interested in the religious instruction of the children of the community. Monthly or quarterly dues were required of each member of the "Union." The funds thus collected provided the materials incidental to the school. This Union was organized with a roll of officers, apart from those in positions of responsibility in the conduct of the Sunday School itself. One of the essential items of business of this Union was the selecting of those who were to conduct the school.

This organization created certain distinctive problems, one of which was that of a competing organization with the church, as such. Instances have been known where the official leadership of the school was placed in the hands of those who were not members of the church. This made for a rivalry and confusion in the conduct of the school. One of the reasons for the antipathy of certain pastors toward the development of the Sunday School was because they felt it infringed upon their responsibility as ministers of the congregation.

In spite of repeated attempts at some sort of reorganization, the Sunday School Union was ultimately discovered to be an unnecessary organization, and the supervision of the school

placed directly in the control of the pastor of the church. The General Conference of 1875 adopted a new section in its discipline, entitled, "Concerning Sunday Schools" by means of which the pastor was made the responsible officer in charge of the school and the local church made responsible for its operation.

In the organization of Sunday School unions, a principle is involved which gives some merit to the organization. It placed the responsibility for the conduct of a Sunday School upon a group of people who were sufficiently interested in the religious education of children to become identified with an organization especially created for that purpose. It was unfortunate that the church group, as an organization, did not of itself assume direct responsibility for this task, that is, provide the leadership and furnish sufficient financial support, out of its own treasury. Today, the churches are endeavoring, through the local boards of religious education, to secure the interest and support of the church, as a church, to be responsible for the total program of religious education. It cannot be carried out through an agency exclusively. The purpose now is to correlate all agencies and to regard religious education as the church's "most fundamental function."

Regarding the numerical growth of membership in the Sunday School, the growth at first was very slow. Beginning with the year 1875, however, a noticeable increase in enrollment is observed. The first statistics available, covering the total enrollment of the Sunday School is for the year 1859, at which time the Sunday School enrollment was 18,473, and the church

membership, 38,310. That is, there were twice as many members of the church as pupils enrolled in the Sunday School. During the next twenty years, or from 1859 to 1879, there was a rapid increase in the Sunday School enrollment, so that it surpassed that of the church membership, until at the present time (1930) there are 100,000 more Sunday School pupils than church members, that is, the enrollment of the Sunday School is 361,210 while the membership of the Evangelical denomination is 260,852. These comparative figures are available in the chart on the following page.

This increase in the enrollment of the Sunday School is accounted for as follows: (1) by the gradual introduction of Sunday Schools into every local congregation of the church; (2) by the inclusion of all age groups as members of the school; (3) the numerical growth of the denomination.

Differences of opinion regarding matters of church polity and control resulted in a division within the denomination in 1891, so that for a period of thirty years, or until 1922, the Evangelical denomination was divided into two bodies known as the "Evangelical Association" and the "United Evangelical Church." A merger of the two groups was successfully consummated in 1922, in Detroit, Michigan, at which time the denomination officially selected the name of "Evangelical Church."

A study of the comparative enrollments of Sunday Schools reveals that out of a total of 2,062 schools in the denomination the largest number, or 570 schools, have an enrollment between 51 and 100; that there are 368 schools with an enrollment of 101-150 and 304 schools having less than 50 enrolled. In other words,

GROWTH IN CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP

<u>Year</u>	<u>Church Membership</u>	<u>Increase</u>	<u>Sunday School Enrollment</u>	<u>Increase</u>
1805	* 75			
1809	426	351		
1813	796	350		
1817	1,493	697		
1821	1,974	481		
1825	2,039	65		
1829	2,862	823		
1833	4,252	1,390		
1835	5,112	860		
1839	7,859	2,747		
1843	13,070	5,211		
1847	14,871	1,801		
1851	21,179	6,308	5,603 (1849)	
1855	27,670	6,491		
1859	38,310	10,600	18,473	
1863	47,674	9,304	26,483	8,010
1867	60,401	13,727	41,395	14,912
1871	78,716	18,315	68,196	26,801
1875	95,253	16,537	90,090	21,994
1879	109,773	14,520	118,640	28,550
1883	120,231	10,458	135,795	17,155
1887	138,668	18,437	162,837	27,042
1891	150,234	11,566	177,639	14,802
1895	181,215	30,981	191,224	13,515
1899	184,565	3,350	220,180	28,956
1903	187,166	2,601	237,465	17,255
1907	200,483	13,317	257,580	20,115
1911	214,431	13,948	288,578	30,998
1915	233,856	19,425	316,905	28,327
1919	248,581	14,725	335,141	19,236
1922	259,417	10,836	419,245	84,104
1926	251,704	7,713 (Loss)	388,826	20,419 (Loss)
1930	260,852	9,148	361,219	27,607 (Loss)

nearly two-thirds or 1,242 schools have an enrollment of 150 or less. Only 67 schools have an enrollment of 500 or over.

<u>Enrollment</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>
1- 50	304
51-100	570
101-150	368
151-200	228
201-300	237
301-400	135
401-500	54
501-600	29
601-700	15
701-800	7
801-900	7
901-1000	1
1000 and over	8
	<u>2,062</u>

This comparative classification in which it is discovered that nearly one-half the schools in the denomination have enrollments of less than one hundred has a distinct bearing upon the type of organization, curriculum and building which ought to be stressed. That is, the proposals for religious educational procedure which includes a highly departmentalized type of programs for schools with enrollments of five hundred and over affects only three percent of the schools or sixty-seven schools in the Evangelical denomination. It means that so far as the Evangelical Church is concerned, a careful analysis must be made of the needs of the schools in terms of their ability to put into practice the suggestions which may be educationally sound but which are impracticable in many of the schools of the denomination.

So far as the present standards of organization of Sunday Schools is concerned, the Board of Religious Education, at its session in 1929, adopted, for experimental use, the International

Standards for the Church School.

Regarding the denominational set-up of the administration of Sunday Schools, the first beginnings are recognized in the steps leading to the organization of the "Sunday School and Tract Union." The first annual meeting was held in Cleveland, Ohio, May 2, 1861, Bishop J. Long, Chairman. An interesting development which arose as the work of the Sunday School and Tract Union progressed was the attempt to secure a full-time worker for the task of promoting its work. The duties of this "traveling agent," as he was called, would be to gather funds for the Union, circulate Sunday School papers, organize Sunday Schools, and thus promote the interests of the Union in the best possible manner. No action in this direction was taken, however. This hesitancy to follow the practice of other denominations in the matter of providing for full-time direction of religious education is rather significant. There has always been a minimum amount of "overhead direction" of the activities of religious education in the Evangelical denomination. The work of denominational direction has usually been left to a board of managers, made up of members who were pastors, editors, and other officials and laymen of the church. The secretaryship of the Board was usually assigned to one of the editors of the denominational literature.

In 1891, after the division into two Evangelical bodies, so far as the United Evangelical branch was concerned, no full-time official in religious education was ever elected, with the exception for a brief period of the services of Dr. Daniel A. Poling, as a field secretary for young people's work. In the

Evangelical Association, a General Secretary for Young People's Alliance and Sunday School work, in the person of Rev. F. C. Berger, was elected in 1907, who continued in office until 1919, when Dr. E. W. Praetorius was elected. At the time of the merger of the two groups, Dr. E. W. Praetorius was continued in office. Where other denominations maintain a staff of workers, assigned to specific tasks, such as Children's, Young People's and Adult specialists, the Evangelical denomination has only one employed officer, namely, the General Secretary, who gives general oversight to all promotional activities of religious education.

In 1911, the General Conference of the Evangelical Association made provisions for the organization of Sunday School boards, which were to function, first, as a general denominational board; second, as a conference board; and third, as a local board at work in the local church. These boards made more effective the management of the Sunday School, as well as a closer linking up of the schools of a conference, and, through the denominational board, a closer affiliation with the schools of the church. In the United Evangelical Church, while no provision had been made for a Sunday School board, its work was linked up, denominationally, in 1914, with the Board of Managers of the Keystone League of Christian Endeavor. After the merger of the two groups in 1922, the plan of Sunday School boards became effective in the reunited church.

One of the most effective means for the promotion of the Sunday School work in the Evangelical denomination was the Sunday School convention. The First Convention of the church was

held in 1868 by the New York Conference in the city of Buffalo, New York. Subsequent conventions were held in all parts of the denomination. The problems considered at these conventions had to do with methods of teaching, increase in enrollment, objectives, recreation, and organization of Sunday Schools.

Organization of Young People's Societies

It is interesting to observe that a little while previous to the time that Dr. Francis E. Clark was organizing the first Christian Endeavor Society in the Williston Congregational Church of Portland, Maine, on February 2, 1881, the Evangelical denomination had organized a society for young people. The first young people's society in the Evangelical denomination was organized in Dayton, Ohio, September 13, 1880, by Rev. C. F. Hansing, Dayton, Ohio, thus preceding Dr. Clark's organization by a few months. Following this young people's societies began to be organized in various sections of the church.

Among the reasons for the spread of this young people's movement within the denomination are: first, the influence of the movement in other denominations; second, a real necessity for some sort of expressional activity. The Sunday School had not as yet expanded its procedure to include the expressional and training feature of its program. These early societies of young people were primarily opportunities for Bible study and group prayer services. The desire to provide adequate guidance in Christian living was one of the motives back of the movement.

Inasmuch as there had been no denominational provision,

from the period covered by the years 1880 to 1891, societies sprang up throughout the church according to the interested direction of some one concerned about young people. Individual constitutions were drawn up. Names for the groups were chosen in accordance with the decisions of the individual societies. One is impressed by the fact that a similar procedure developed in the organization of the Sunday School in the local church. At first, they were organized without any denominational supervision or guidance. Then, when there were a sufficient number, so that they had achieved some degree of significance in the life of the denomination, a General Conference provision was made, whereby general supervision and direction was provided.

Denominational direction of young people's societies began in the year 1891. Since this was the year of the unfortunate division of the denomination into two groups, each branch made provisions for the carrying forward of young people's work. The General Conference of the United Evangelical Church authorized the organization of the Keystone League, which later was affiliated with Christian Endeavor. The Evangelical Association organized the "Young People's Alliance" with no affiliation with the United Society of Christian Endeavor. Both denominational groups made rapid progress in the organization of young people's societies in local churches. The age group was expanded so as to include not only young people but Junior and Intermediate ages as well. In 1922, at the time of the merger of the United Evangelical and Evangelical Association groups, the name of "Evangelical League of Christian Endeavor" was adopted.

There are at the present time (1930) five types of Leagues, which are graded as follows:

Junior League for ages 9, 10, 11

Intermediate League, for ages 12, 13, 14

Senior League, for ages 15, 16, 17

Young People's League, for ages 18 to 24

Adult Leagues, for ages 25 and over.

Just as in the development of the Sunday School movement, conventions held an important place in the development of young people's societies, and furnished an avenue of inspiration and guidance. They provided excellent opportunities for the sharing of methods of work as well as stimulating denominational interest in young people's work. Each conference and the various districts also held annual conventions.

Up to 1930, the work of the League had been carried on through eight departments with corresponding committees, namely, Lookout, Christian Work, Quiet Hour and Bible Study, Stewardship, Missions, Literary and Social Culture, Sympathy and Service, and Christian Citizenship. In order to simplify the organization, all of these activities were in 1930 included in four departments, namely, Worship, Instruction, Service and Recreation. Provision was also made at the General Conference of 1930 for the organization of a conference young people's union, made up of members between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four, whose purpose is to unify and promote the denominational program of religious education. This union is in charge of the Young People's Council, consisting of the President, Vice-President, Sec-

retary and Treasurer of the Union, together with the Adult Counselor, the Conference Director of Religious Education, the Secretaries of Promotion, and not more than six members at large of the Conference Union who are chosen annually. Through this organization ample provision is made for youth participation.

Organization of the Woman's
Missionary Society

Because the activities of this organization also include the various age groups of the church, it is necessary to make reference to this organization in any study of religious education of the denomination. After some difficulty in securing official permission from denominational authorities for the organization of Woman's Missionary Societies in local churches, the Board of Missions, at its session in October, 1880, granted the request. At once local societies sprang up, the first two being organized at Lindsey, Ohio, and South Chicago, Illinois, on the same day, October 27, 1880.

While it was the purpose of the organization to stimulate missionary interest among the women of the church, its work soon extended to other age groups. Work was first begun among the smaller children, which subsequently became known as the "Mission Band." A few years later, as these children grew older, the need was felt for a continuation of the work of missionary activity among the older boys and girls, which resulted in an organization, now known as the "Young People's Missionary Circle." Provision was also made for the organization of babies and pre-school children, which is called the "Little Heralds."

Thus, in this expansion of program, we observe a trend similar to that taken by the Sunday School and the Young People's Society. The Sunday School began as an organization for children and then expanded its organization to include all age groups. The Young People's Society began as an organization, exclusively, for young people, and now has five age group departments. The Woman's Missionary Society began as an organization for the women of the church, and now includes other age groups of both sexes as well.

Through its program of mission study and extensive missionary giving, the Woman's Missionary Society and its auxiliaries has made a distinct contribution to the life of the denomination.

Other Agencies of Religious Education

There are a number of additional organizations which have contributed to the development of religious education within the Evangelical denomination. The work among men has been carried on chiefly through the Adult Bible Class and Adult Leagues. In 1926 special provision was made for the organization of Men's Brotherhoods, whose work is being carried on through four major departments, namely, Devotional Life and Evangelism, Stewardship and Missions, Training and Fellowship, and Social Service.

Other agencies supplementing the work of religious education within the denomination are the Vacation Schools, Week-Day Schools, Boys' and Girls' Camps, and various extra-church organizations, such as the Y. M. C. A., Boy Scouts, and other similar agencies.

Trends Toward Correlation of Agencies of Religious Education

As one reviews the development of the various agencies of religious education, as they have found their place in the program of the denomination, an indisputable fact is most evident, namely, the multiplicity of organizations working within the local church. There is evidence that this danger of overlapping was recognized by some of the early leaders of the church, sometimes for fear that the organization in which they were especially interested might suffer, and, frequently, because of the conviction that religious education should be considered an integral part of the total program of the church rather than allocated to some specific agency.

The Mission Band of the Woman's Missionary Society and the Junior League of the Young People's Society minister to practically the same age group; the Mission Band from six to thirteen, the Junior League from nine to eleven. As the Sunday Schools and the Young People's Societies expanded their individual types of organization to include the various age-groups, the discovery was made that oftentimes they were in reality in competition for the time of the same group. Local churches attempted to readjust their programs to solve the situation. There were various suggestions offered, when the duplication of activity first became apparent, to provide for a closer cooperation between these agencies. Not only in local congregations but in the conference and general denominational activity there was conflict in the carrying forward of the program of religious education.

Because of this confusion and misunderstanding caused through unrelated agencies, as well as the lack of coordination of program in the local churches, the General Conference, meeting in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, in October, 1926, made provision for the creation of a Board of Religious Education, the purpose of which is foster, promote, correlate, supervise and make effective the work of religious education as done in and by the local church. Three classes of Boards were provided, namely: The General Board of Religious Education, which has the general supervision of religious education in the denomination; the Conference Board of Religious Education, which provides the medium for conference supervision; the Local Board of Religious Education, which directs the work of religious education in the local church, the function of this board being regulative rather than executive. Thus it is observed that the Evangelical denomination, in the development of its organization of religious education, has worked out its program in three distinct areas: first, in the church at large; second, in the annual conferences; and third, in the local church.

Provision is also made for the appointment of a Director of Religious Education in the local church. Either paid or volunteer workers may serve. When it is recalled that according to the figures of the enrollment in the Sunday Schools, only 67 have an enrollment of 500 or more, it is obvious that the employment of a paid director of religious education in the local churches of this denomination will be the exception rather than the rule. The pastor of the church may, under certain circumstances, serve

very acceptably as a director.

Regarding the effectiveness of the Board, experience is demonstrating that so far as the general and conference boards are concerned, it has simplified and coordinated the total program of religious education. In the local churches, the period of time is too short to form an adequate judgment. Those churches which have reorganized their local programs on this basis have discovered the organization of a Board of Religious Education to be a great help in the solution of their difficulties in that an adequate basis of correlation has been found. There is another angle from which to view the work of the board of religious education in the local church, and that is that this radical readjustment was made, not on the basis of much past experience with this type of organization, but in order to obviate future confusion and difficulty. This differs from previous methods of adopting new procedures when it is recalled that in the Evangelical denomination Sunday Schools were being organized from 1832 to 1875, a period of over forty years, and that young people's societies were being set up from 1880 to 1891, a period of over ten years, before any denominational supervision was given.

The recent readjustment of the religious educational program of the Evangelical Church is the result of the anticipated needs of the local church. It was primarily due to the intelligent foresight of certain denominational leaders in religious education, notably, Dr. E. W. Praetorius, General Secretary of the Board of Religious Education. His intelligent grasp of the situation as it applied to the needs of the church has made pos-

sible these forward steps in the religious educational program of the denomination. The purpose has been to anticipate the needs of the local churches, rather than wait until the damage resulting from confusion and misunderstanding through lack of any program of correlation had reached too great proportions.

Part III

Trends in Curriculum of Religious Education

Informal guidance in religious living characterized the early period of the development of the church. There was a minimum amount of formal instruction. The fact that all religious meetings were held in the homes gave an opportunity for the children and young people to share in the religious experiences of the older people. The parents assumed direct responsibility for the religious education of their children. Morning and evening prayers, singing, and opportunities for religious fellowship were daily features of the home life of the early Evangelical families. The atmosphere of the home was preeminently religious.

The first reference to instruction of children was a resolution passed by the conference of the church, in 1811, requesting "that all preachers should hold instruction of children regularly." A small catechism, which had been translated by Rev. John Dreisbach, had been ordered published in 1809. The first formal method of instruction in the denomination was the catechetical method. In 1847, William W. Orwig published a catechism

in the German language. In 1852 this was translated into English and continued in use until 1882 when it was replaced by a catechism written by Bishop J. J. Esher. Bishop Esher was one of the outstanding advocates of the catechetical method of instruction. He believed that instruction limited to the Sunday School did not accomplish the results that a personal contact between the minister and the children accomplished. So keenly did he feel the need of more carefully planned instruction that, in 1863, as chairman of the Committee on Education at the General Conference, he sponsored a resolution endorsing the establishment of parochial schools in connection with the congregations. Nothing was done about it, however, principally because of the desire to avoid the danger of making the church too formalistic.

Following 1926 the Board of Religious Education of the Evangelical Church undertook a revision of the whole catechetical procedure by making provisions for the grading of texts in catechism. There are now three grades of catechism available: The Junior Catechism, which is written in simple language and for use of children between the ages of nine and twelve; The Handbook of Religion which is designed for use with youth; What Evangelicals Believe, by Bishop S. P. Spreng, which is a doctrinal statement of belief intended for use with groups of young people. Another book, Seeking Admission by W. E. Peffley, serves the pastor in classes designed to prepare for church membership.

The Development of Curriculum in the Sunday School

With the organization of the first Sunday School in

Lebanon, Pennsylvania, in 1832, and the authorization by the General Conference of 1835 for the establishing of Sunday Schools throughout the denomination we have the beginnings of a curriculum problem which perplexed the early leaders in the movement and which persists to the present time. A demand for some sort of literary material arose throughout the church where Sunday Schools were being organized, other churches refusing to organize because of lack of materials.

The fact that the Sunday Schools were conducted in the German language augmented the practical difficulties which faced these early pioneers in curriculum building. There were no German Sunday School books to be purchased on the market. The Methodist Episcopal Church had made considerable progress in its program of providing materials for use in its Sunday Schools. These books, however, were printed in the English language. The American Sunday School Union likewise was busily preparing materials for use in Sunday Schools, but these also were entirely English. The Lutheran Church, which was confining its work among the German-speaking peoples, did not begin the active promotion of Sunday Schools until after 1860. Through the method of parochial schools, catechetical instruction leading up to confirmation, this communion was meeting the demands for the religious education of its children.

Because of this situation the Evangelical denomination was left to its own devices in the preparation of the material for use in the Sunday Schools. The Bible became the primary type of material. Church periodicals and church hymnals were also

used. While there was a great lack of printed materials, the fact that the classes were held in the homes, and the further fact that this was a cooperative enterprise on the part of the families, made of this procedure a share experience which has certain values that are not obtainable even in the best equipped buildings for religious education.

Memorization of verses of the Bible and hymns was the principal method of teaching. A part of each class session was taken up with the hearing of verses which had been committed to memory. This memorization emphasis reached its most important stage beginning with the year 1850 and continuing until 1870, although in individual schools the method has continued to the present time. Many of the older members recall this period of instruction in their early experience in Sunday Schools. The reports as they appeared in the denominational periodicals are very revealing as to the extent of this practice. When the startling number of verses which were reported as having been memorized by individual pupils, ranging occasionally from fifty to one hundred verses per pupil per Sunday, it is to be wondered how all of these verses could have been recited even during the class period of one hour.

In order to stimulate memorization an elaborate award system was introduced. The child was handed a blue ticket if it memorized a certain number of verses, and as soon as the number of blue rickets were increased to six, the child would be given a red ricket. This would be negotiable for the securing of some prize, usually a Bible or a new book out of the Sunday School

library.

The Sunday School library held an important place in the early organization of the Sunday School in the Evangelical denomination. Because the publishing house had not yet begun to issue materials for use in the Sunday School in the form of lesson helps, this material was purchased in the form of books. This library contained books which were not only used in the class sessions, but also books of a general nature which could be withdrawn for one week and returned the following Sunday.

Another of the practical problems which faced the early workers in the field of religious education in the Evangelical denomination was the teaching of the German language during the regular sessions of the Sunday School. For the younger children, and older ones unable to read the German, this German language instruction was the principal type of procedure. There are many members of the church living today who recall the method by which they were taught the German language during the regular sessions of the Sunday School. The publishing house printed many volumes of books suitable for the teaching of the German language. Special wall charts, displaying the letters of the German alphabet both in printing and writing, were distributed among the churches.

Various reasons are given for this emphasis upon the German language, one being that the early pioneers believed their principal responsibility lay among the German-speaking peoples. The General Conference of 1830 adopted a resolution which ordered the ministry to confine its work among the German portion of the population. This action was not repealed until the General

Conference of 1843, at which time a resolution was adopted that hereafter "the denomination shall labor both for the English and the German portion of our population." From this time forward every provision for worship in the English language was made, English conferences were organized, and English periodical was begun, and translations of disciplines and hymn-books were made for use in English-speaking congregations.

The first strictly Sunday School publication was the Christliche Kinderfreund which began in 1855. This was a reading paper for children. In 1860 an English reading paper appeared entitled The Evangelical Sunday School Messenger. In 1872 Das Evangelische Magazin, a German publication, made its appearance. This was a family and Sunday School magazine and quite an effective means of dissemination of Sunday School and Normal class information. In 1875 the English Sunday School Teacher began publication. With the formation of the Sunday School and Tract Union in 1860 the distribution as well as preparation of Sunday School materials was anticipated. The materials were not forthcoming, however. In spite of the assurance that they would, confusion and lack of materials persisted. The Sunday Schools were "shopping around" for materials. One issue of the Botschafter in its editorial columns recommended the use of the "National" series being published in Chicago, Illinois.

It was not until the International Uniform Lesson System made its appearance in 1872 that a consecutive series of lesson materials was available. Just as soon as they appeared they were described in the publications of the Evangelical Church. Official

recognition of the Uniform System was authorized by the General Conference of 1875. Since a considerable proportion of the Sunday Schools in the denomination were still being conducted in the German language it was necessary to translate these materials.

As was the case with other denominations, a feeling of dissatisfaction gradually arose regarding the Uniform System, especially in its use with younger children. It was felt that it was too material centered and the treatment of the lesson materials too largely exegetical. By a slow process of change the Uniform Series as applied to the Children's Division has been dropped and the Group Graded Series substituted. The Group Graded material is provided for the Intermediate Department. The Improved Uniform Lessons are printed for use in the Senior, Young People's and Adult Departments.

Part IV

Trends in Procedures of Religious Education

In this study of religious education in the Evangelical denomination we turn now to a consideration of the development of various procedures, namely, those of worship, teaching, leadership training, service and recreation.

Worship

One of the most fruitful sources for the discovering of the denominational trends in the content and procedure of worship arises out of a careful study of the changing types of hymnology. So far as the Evangelical denomination is concerned, the singing

of hymns has always been an integral part of its church life. Inspirational congregational singing has occupied an important place in the worship services. Throughout the history of the denomination, camp meetings and evangelistic services have been significant features of its life, and these make abundant use of the technique of song. Not only in public worship was the singing of hymns emphasized, but in the family circle as well. Admonitions regarding the regular holding of family periods of worship, both in the morning and evening, were repeatedly stressed by the ministers and the denominational papers.

The development of hymnology in the Evangelical Church took place along two general directions. First, hymn-books were prepared for general use in the services of public worship, and second, for use in the Sunday School and other services.

A small book of songs was prepared in the year 1810 by John Walter, one of the first ministers of the denomination. Up to this time Lutheran and Reformed Church hymn-books had been used. Because this book was more or less of a private venture on the part of John Walter, and rather limited in size and number of hymns, the General Conference of 1816 authorized the publishing of another hymn-book to be known as Das Geistliche Saitenspiel (The Spiritual Psalter).

The first Sunday School hymn-book was published in 1840. This book underwent many revisions. The first book with musical notations was the German Sunday School book Juebeltoene, which was published in 1871. A number of other books have appeared, the latest being The Evangelical Church School Hymnal, published

in 1930.

A comparison of the themes of the various divisions of the hymns as used in the Sunday School hymn-books of 1843, 1871 and 1930 reveals an interesting study in the changing character of the hymnology for use in religious education in the Evangelical denomination. Certain distinct trends in hymn themes are in evidence. One noticeable trend is from the concept of God as a stern Judge to God as a loving Father. One observes also a development from a solely personal and individualistic emphasis toward the inclusion of a group or social responsibility as well. In the early hymns the element of fear played a strong part, whereas in the 1930 hymnal love and loyalty receive the emphasis. Gloom and forebodings of the future, especially in the next world, are stressed in the earlier songs whereas in the last hymnal hymns descriptive of "the virility and cheerfulness of a wholesome Christian experience" are selected.

In considering the historical development of the services of worship in the religious educational program of the church, one must bear in mind the type of organization which characterized the early schools. They were chiefly for children and in control of adults. The only adults present in the session were officers and teachers. Services of worship were not definitely planned. There was no thought of the school as an opportunity for training in worship. Any opening hymns or scripture readings were considered "preliminary" to the real purpose of the school. As the years pass a more formal procedure for the conduct of the worship period is developed, until at the present time there is

a distinct trend toward the inclusion of liturgical elements in the services of worship.

Teaching

It is difficult to separate the subject matter of the curriculum from the method. Some elements of content under the term "Curriculum" have been considered. We now turn to the method of using this material. Both content and method are very intimately woven together in practice. The sources reveal the following types of teaching in use in the early period:

First, because memorization was the principal method of class procedure, the type of teaching was that of the recitation. The time of the class period taken up in the reciting of verses previously committed to memory.

Second, since the Bible was the only material available, most of the definite instructions regarding methods of teaching have to do with the proper use of the Bible.

Third, one of the popular earlier methods was the use of the blackboard. Designs and pictures illustrating the lesson were used.

In a study of the literature dealing with recent teaching procedure in the Evangelical denomination one discovers that it is more or less the result of scientific studies in the field of general and religious education. Those who contribute to the thinking of teaching technique write from the basis of educational and technical experience. Among the methods in practice are the following: lecture, discussion, story telling, pageantry and dramatization, and project. Recent references to experience-

centered teaching indicate significant trends away from the purely material-centered curriculum.

So far as teaching procedures in young people's societies is concerned, where the society is properly conducted, the adult-controlled type of group procedure is at a minimum, owing to the provision for the presence of only one adult who acts in the capacity of a counsellor, and an opportunity for cooperative investigation on the part of the members of the group is oftentimes made possible.

Leadership Training

The early attempts providing for adequate preparation of workers in religious education in the local church dealt primarily with the teacher in the Sunday School. One of the first suggestions making provision for the training of the teacher appears in the denominational paper, the Botschafter of 1868, in a report of the first denominational Sunday School convention. In 1874 the findings of the Chicago District Convention, held at Barrington, Illinois, took steps in providing trained teachers and suggesting a program for a teachers' meeting. In 1879 the General Conference adopted a resolution urging the organizing of normal classes in every local church. Textbooks were prepared, the Evangelical Church being one of the earliest among the denominations to make definite provisions for the training of teachers. New series of texts were prepared until 1922 when the denomination began its cooperation with the International Council of Religious Education in its program of Leadership Training. The full outline of the General and Specialization units, together

with suggested textbooks is described in a booklet "Leadership Training" issued by the General Board of Religious Education of the church, and generously distributed throughout the denomination.

Aside from the regular classes, local, group and district institutes provide a helpful means for the development of leadership efficiency in the local church. One of the important elements of any conference program of religious education is the regular holding of one- and two-day institutes in various sections of the state. Two specialists are usually present and a consideration of actual problems on the field forms the basis of the conference. These institutes provide opportunity for the sharing of experiences and the formulation of adequate procedures which the worker may adapt to his particular field. The various educational institutions of the denomination have established departments of religious education and offer standard courses in Bible and religious education.

Service

Very early in the organization of the local Sunday School opportunities for service acts by the pupils formed a part of the procedure. These usually took the form of special programs at New Years, the occasions being called "New Years' Festivals." Children participated in the programs, and an offering for missionary purposes was received. In other schools the practice of receiving regular missionary offerings during the Sunday School sessions was followed. An outstanding day in the Evangelical program of religious education is that of Children's Day which

has been developed as an annual day of missionary inspiration and giving. The day was first observed in 1880 as a Sunday School Jubilee Day in commemoration of the founding of the first Sunday School by Robert Raikes in England, just one hundred years previous. The General Conference of 1883, however, authorized that the day should be observed as a Missionary Day and the offerings devoted to missionary purposes.

Recreation

The negative attitude of the early leaders of religious education toward the social and recreational life of the group is only a reflection of the spirit of the religious population as a whole. This was due to the theological conceptions of human nature which prevailed at the time, resulting in an emphasis upon the "other worldly" objectives, rather than in the development of the child for a well-rounded, effective Christian personality. The influence of the Puritan type of behavior of early American church life is too familiar to require further comment.

One is not surprised, therefore, to discover in the Evangelical denomination an indifferent attitude toward any special provisions for the social development of children. Warnings are frequently uttered by ministers and leaders of the church regarding the dangers to their spiritual development if children and young people are allowed too much freedom in social and recreational activities. The church buildings made no provision for recreational procedures. There were certain forms of recreation, however, which gradually developed. Outdoor celebrations, picnics, and various kinds of programs in the churches were the

principal types of earlier forms of social expression.

Since 1900 there has been a distinct trend in the direction of adequate provision for a wholesome social and recreational program. The various organizations appoint committees to supervise recreational activities. There is a trend toward cooperative direction. Instead of an arbitrary adult control of the social and recreational program, there are indications of a cooperative type of endeavor. Recreational procedures are arrived at by the results of a shared experience of young and old, and through the process of cooperative investigation the program becomes the expression of the best thinking and highest ideals of the group. The change in type of church architecture with its provision for social rooms is an indication of the recognition which the denomination is beginning to give to a wholesome recreational program.

Part V

Trends in Objectives of Religious Education

This study of religious education in the Evangelical denomination has revealed the fact that it has been principally along empirical lines that religious education has developed. There was consequently no definite formulation of aims, and those which have developed have grown up more or less informally as experience widened and needs demanded.

There are certain specific factors which enter into the building up of objectives in the Evangelical program of religious education which may not be so apparent in other religious groups.

One factor is the early religious educational experience of the first members of the denomination. Many of them had previously come through a process of indoctrination by means of the catechetical and confirmation techniques in other communions. In these communions after confirmation the young people usually became active participants in the life and worship of the church. Those who became members of the Evangelical denomination, however, had only become members after they had passed through an intense conversion experience. As a consequence, in the minds of some of the early members this vital experience seemed to make unnecessary any provision for development through the processes of religious education.

This problem of harmonizing the conversion technique with the catechetical method proved a persistent issue. Persons were to become members of the Evangelical denomination, not through the confirmation technique but rather through the process of conversion. Consequently, these two alternatives needed constantly to be faced. Too much emphasis could not be placed upon the catechetical method for fear that religion would become too formal; on the other hand, it was felt there could be no fundamental basis for a vital religious experience without a thorough grounding in the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

Another determining factor in early objectives of religious education was the influence of the German language. Since in the majority of cases the worship services were conducted in this language, and since the community did not provide adequate instruction in that language, if growing children were to parti-

cipate in the life of the church, instruction in language must be provided and therefore became one of the aims of the Sunday School in its early stages.

With reference to the historical aims of the Sunday School in order to encourage the movement for their organization it was necessary that attention be called to the values of the organization, and statements of purpose were therefore frequent. It is to be observed that these aims indicate the intimate relationship between the instructional and evangelistic objectives.

Trends in objectives are also available in the Episcopal messages which were delivered to the General Conferences every four years since 1863. A comparison of the messages of 1863, 1887, 1926 and 1930 reveals a significant trend away from the exclusively denominational interests to the inclusion of the interests of society at large. The church is concerned in the building of a better social order as well as stimulating individual living. While in the first message, reference was made to the Civil War, it was principally in relation to the effect which the war had upon the progress of the church. In the last message comprehensive statements with reference to the various social problems were made, and the membership of the church urged to support all movements looking toward the solution of these problems.

In reference to religious education, the 1930 message differs from the previous messages in that the various agencies are not mentioned specifically. The local church was made central. The statement of this Episcopal message dealing with re-

religious education opens with the sentence: "Every church must be a school in Christian living." Thus it is observed that religious education has come to be viewed as being a primary function of the church. This 1930 message also contains the first definite formulation of objectives of religious education.

Part VI

The Meaning of the Trends

Through the process of digging deep into the rich mind of over one hundred years of past experience in religious educational development of the Evangelical Church, it has become possible to uncover certain outstanding trends.

The Meaning of Trends in Organization

Tracing the development of organization one discovers a movement, first, which seeks to function through the establishing of agencies. These are organized to meet the needs of a particular age group. The second step is the expansion of the work of this agency to include other age groups. The third aspect arises when these agencies seek to allocate various activities to each other. The next step is the provision for a Board of Religious Education which places the responsibility of religious education directly upon the local church. The church thus finally assumes its fundamental function of religious education.

The Meaning of Trends in Curriculum

The study of the development of curriculum procedures has

centered attention upon the complex problem of supplying materials for use in local church situations. As one reads of the attempts which were made by the Evangelical denomination to provide its own materials, how committees were authorized to provide "Sunday School Books," how pastors were urged to submit manuscripts for books which might be used in classes and how meagre the response, all of this makes almost pathetic reading because of the sincere efforts which were put forth to meet the urgent need. The churches were encouraged to organize schools and when they were organized, had difficulty in maintaining the organization because of limited materials. From 1836 to 1872 the denominational periodicals repeatedly called attention to the lack of adequate guidance in curriculum procedure.

As soon as the International Uniform Lessons made their appearance in 1872 the Evangelical Church adopted them as a part of its own curriculum procedure. Thus began a gradual movement toward interdenominational cooperation in curriculum building. So far as trends in curriculum are concerned, they point conclusively to the fact that leadership in this activity extends beyond the borders of the denomination into the broader field of interdenominational effort, where the results of scientific research are made available.

As one surveys this period of struggle on the part of the early leaders to provide adequate materials, it is to be regretted, even though it could not be helped, that these leaders did not sense the opportunity which each teacher had, even without available lesson materials. The emphasis was then, as it is

now in many instances, upon a material-centered curriculum. If, however, "the content of religious education is the experience of the learner as it undergoes enrichment, interpretation and control in terms of Christian ideals and purposes," these early workers had all the material necessary and were not aware of it. The churches, furthermore, were supporting the maintenance of Sunday School libraries which might have been used as source materials.

The Meaning of Trends in the Development of Procedures

Tracing the development of hymnology, there is a noticeable trend in the theological content of the hymns. The Christian life is viewed not only from the angle of its individual responsibility to God but also from the side of its corporate responsibility as well. There is also a distinct trend toward the more elaborate services of worship which is in harmony with a general movement toward the inclusion of a larger degree of the ritualistic content in orders of service.

So far as the teaching procedure is concerned, the earliest types emphasized their citation. Recent developments indicate a trend toward greater pupil participation, although this would need to be verified by records made from actual observations of teaching procedure. Supervision is still in its beginnings as a procedure in the religious educational development of the Evangelical denomination.

The trend in social and recreational procedures has developed from that of a more or less negative attitude to one which recognizes the contribution which a wholesome approach to

this activity may make. As much as possible the tendency appears to be to provide for community direction and a type of program worked out which shall be conducted in cooperation with the home, the school, and other community agencies.

The Meaning of Trends in Objectives

This historical survey reveals that the early suggestions dealing with objectives were concerned more with the specific aims of the various agencies of religious education. The question usually stated was: "What is the purpose of the Sunday School; the Young People's Society?" As experience has proceeded there has emerged a desire to state these objectives in terms of the total function of the church rather than in terms of agencies.

The content of the objectives has been widened so as to culminate in the achieving of a Christian personality, thus making the purposes of evangelism and instruction a unit rather than separate methods. This Christian personality is to function through the institutionalized expression of the Christian religion, the church, and become an aware and effective member of the various groups in our society.

This study of trends in objectives in the Evangelical denomination indicates that the immediate steps are the providing of specific objectives in local church situations. For it is in the local church that the program of religious education succeeds or fails. These specific and concrete objectives are needed to provide adequate incentives as well as affording the means by which measurement of progress may be scientifically determined.

